

Speech

Organization of American States



**LUIGI R. EINAUDI, ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL OF
THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
AT THE CLOSING CEREMONIES OF THE THIRD REGULAR
SESSION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST
TERRORISM
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Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends;

I have the honor of saying a few words to close this Third Regular Session of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism.

The rich dialogue among heads of delegation, the numerous and informative technical reports, our formal and informal deliberations have made clear once again our common commitment to fight terrorism.

This meeting was so rich that anything I chose to emphasize will prove arbitrary. So I will be unabashedly selective and make just three points.

First, the representative of the United Nations said yesterday that "CICTE is an example for other regions of the world to emulate." We in the OAS often talk about the need for our activities to be in harmony with those of the United Nations System. But it is a fact that there are issues on which our regional Organization is the one that is pushing the envelope and setting the standards. Democracy has long been one area in which our emerging regional jurisprudence sets us apart. Aspects of our battles against corruption and illegal drugs have also set global precedents. Now the work of the Inter-American Committee Against Terrorism is doing the same. I thank Ambassador Ward for his recognition of our efforts. And I would thank Foreign Minister Caldera of Nicaragua for contributing another dimension to our global relationships: the need to act together against the intrusion of global arms traffickers on our security.

Second, Article 15 of the Inter-American Convention Against Terrorism states that "The measures carried out by the states parties under the Convention shall take place with full respect for the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms." The struggle against terrorism poses many difficult dilemmas. I thank Professor Mendez for helping us make clear once again that the sacrifice of liberty is not one of them.

Third and last, as we close this Third Regular Session of CICTE, we must look forward to the Special Conference on Security in Mexico in May. That Conference offers an unusual opportunity to update the Inter-American security system. The opportunity was born with the end of the cold war and given urgency by what has simply come to be known as "9/11". The security challenge now before us is frighteningly multidimensional for it includes conventional military threats, all of the issues of organized crime - drug and arms trafficking, corruption and of course, terrorism - plus matters that have long been considered outside of the mandate of the uniformed services, whether military or police, such as the environment and natural disasters, health, and even information management. Assistant Secretary of State Bloomfield drove the point home in his very interesting presentation on Cyber Security, characterizing it not only as "a very different national security issue than traditional security issues with which we have long experience," but as one with profound implications for all our economies. I thought when he said that that I was hearing echoes of small island state concerns over global warming or other aspects of globalization. Mexico will afford us the opportunity to face all this indeterminacy when we examine these issues, new and old.

This very indeterminacy makes the ritual of gratitude, thanking all concerned, so important. In the absence of clarity, with no clear distinctions to guide us, it is individuals who more than ever must assume the responsibility of making operative the knowledge and contacts gained here that are so vital to our future.

I wish to thank Maria Eugenia Brizuela de Avila, El Salvador's Foreign Minister, and Ambassador Margarita Escobar, El Salvador's Permanent Representative to the OAS and through them the President of the Republic, the Minister of the Interior and the heads of the legislative and judicial branches; The staff at the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior, including the security officers: your hospitality, professionalism, and support exceeded even our high expectations. The CICTE Secretariat, headed by Steven Monblatt, the Committee Secretary, Gillian Bristol, the Conferences and Meetings Staff; our translators and interpreters; the hotel management and staff; all have earned our gratitude, as have all the many others, some visible, some not, who worked tirelessly so that we could concentrate on strengthening regional cooperation against terrorism.

But my final thanks are to you, the delegations. Brazil, Chile, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States deserve special thanks for announcing the financial contributions that will help the CICTE Secretariat continue its outstanding work. But no less than 30 Member States were present, some with world-class experts, all with people who can help forge the mutual trust and day-to-day operational ties that are the foundation of our common well-being and security.

Thank you all very much.

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